



Quality Health Care for Rural Texas

Texas Association of Rural Health Clinics

P.O. Box 14547, Austin, TX 78761

Ramsey Longbotham, Executive Director

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20554

August 17, 2011

RE: Applications by AT&T and T-Mobile for consent to merge – WT Docket No. 11-65

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

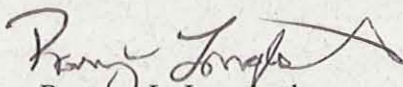
The Texas Association of Rural Health Clinics (TARHC) serves primary care clinics in rural areas throughout the state. The Association is a primary resource for its members, and non-association Rural Health Clinics (RHCs), to share information and experiences while also offering technical assistance with development and organization, in addition to networking opportunities with other organizations that address rural health issues.

Our support of these rural clinics has been maintained by a core belief that “citizens of rural communities should not be shortchanged when it comes to health care”. They deserve the same options and quality of service that residents of more metropolitan areas receive. The AT&T and T-Mobile merger can help ensure that they receive such care.

By expanding rural mobile broadband coverage, this merger will allow innovative health solutions to penetrate areas that may otherwise remain limited in access. Citizens of rural communities will have the opportunity to receive the top-notch health care that modern communication networks provide, including telemedicine, applications such as in-home health monitoring, electronic medical records, and videoconference consultations with medical specialists. The technology-based improvements have the potential to revolutionize the quality of health care for Texas’ rural citizens.

We believe the value this merger presents for rural patients is worth your consideration. Please keep in mind the well-being of these men and women as you evaluate the proposed merger

Sincerely,


Ramsey L. Longbotham

CC:

Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn